RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

Annual Report 2011-12

Introduction

The RBML had an unusually busy, productive, and eventful year. Accessions remained strong and encouraging for both archives and rare books, while use of the collections by patrons was unusually robust (see Appendix A) for public services statistics). Indeed, for almost half of the hours we were open to researchers, we had to make use of two reading rooms simultaneously. At the same time, our work with classes and academic programs remains quite active and broad based. The initial results of our first major public services assessment of on-site researchers were extremely encouraging: quite positive, especially with regard to staff knowledge and helpfulness. Work on our new Aeon automated registration and circulation system has moved forward nicely, and we are now close to implementation. Major grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the International Fellowships Program (Ford Foundation) have allowed for new, important initiatives. We have begun an ambitious new archiving program for born-digital materials, and took the lead in a series of important new digital projects that have brought more RBML content to the web. Our exhibits program remains active and diverse, and our two lecture series robust, well attended, and well received. The Jay Papers continued their successful progress through Jay's career, with volume two of the series appearing this past year. And the Center for Oral History updated its home page and rolled out an impressive social media program, expanding its profile within and outside the University.

The staff of the RBML comprise a remarkably talented, mature, and creative team, whose dedication to their work and to the institution is exemplary. Archivists, curators, public services staff, editors, and project staff throughout the unit are singular in their productivity and service orientation.

The report that follows is confined to highlights of the past year that suggest something of the breadth and depth of our collective accomplishments.

Notable Accessions and Processing:

This past year, we accessioned some 2,346 linear feet of manuscripts and archives in 150 separate collections or addenda. On the backside, we processed some 1,700 linear feet in 77 discrete collections (see Appendix B for a summary of processing activity). The graduate intern program, managed and administered by the RBML for Columbia's special collections, continues to play a very important and positive role in our overall approach to processing. It brings us talented graduate students who do exceptionally good work. Some even make important discoveries along the way.

On the other side of the aisle, we acquired nearly 7,000 printed books, mostly by gift. This is an unusually large intake in recent years, and it points to the ongoing vibrancy of our rare book program.

In addition, this past year saw the acquisition of three medieval items: a leaf from a 12th-century "Atlantic" bible; a gradual with the sung parts of the Mass, dating from the very early years of the 14th century in an astonishingly small pocket size; and a commentary on hymns produced in Italy in the first decades of the 15th century. We were also able to acquire an entirely woven book in a medieval style and produced on looms in Lyons, France in 1886. This extraordinary feat was accomplished by a very early of programmed punch cards that operated the finely calibrated looms.

Finally, the Center for Oral History logged over 200 hours of recorded interviews.

Papers of Individuals:

Paul Jarrico (Black-listed screenwriter in Hollywood)
Wilfred Feinberg (Judge, 2nd Circuit)
Maxwell Bodenheim (Greenwich Village writer/poet/proto-Beat)
Chris Claremont (Comic books, graphic novels)
Max Frankel (New York Times)
Manning Marable (Columbia historian and activist)
Charles P. Sifton (Judge, Eastern District Court)
Robert Bone (TC English prof. and innovator in African American Studies)
Seymour Topping (New York Times)
Jack Agueros (Poet and community activist)
Joseph Stiglitz (Columbia economist and Nobel Laureate)
Joseph McCrindle (Publisher/editor)
Lewis Henkin (Columbia Law School, human rights curriculum)
Ronald Hobbs (Literary agent for African American writers)
Ian and Betty Ballantine (Publishers)

Records of Organizations:

Physicians for Human Rights
Overseas Press Club
International Fellowships Program
Dalkey Archive Press
Comics Magazine Association of America

Book and Other Collections:

Lester Ziffren Collection on bullfighting (ca. 2,000 vols.)
Betty Ballantine gift (4,000 vols., pristine runs of Penguin, Ballantine, and Bantam paperbacks)
Frederick Fried Collection relating to Coney Island

CCOH Interviews:

Guantanamo/Rule of Law
Carnegie Corporation of New York

Herbert Gans (Sociology, CU)
Helene Kaplan (BC Trustee emerita)
Philip Milstein (CU Trustee)
Barney Rosset (Founder and publisher, Grove Press)
Elliott Sclar (CU urban planner)
Jack B. Weinstein (District Court Judge and former CU Law faculty)

Jay Papers Project:

Vol. 2 published by the University of Virginia Press
Vols. 3 and 4 completed in manuscript form
Vol. 5 begun

Administrative Changes:

To better balance workloads and assignments, we reorganized the RBML to create three discrete units: Archives Processing under the leadership of Carrie Hintz; the Curators Group, moderated by Eric Wakin; and Access and Public Services, headed up by Susan Hamson. In addition, Eric Wakin was made Curator of Manuscripts, with stewardship and processing liaison responsibilities.

We were also happy to announce the appointment of Jane Gorjevsky as our first Digital Assets Librarian. When Jane left her post as Carnegie Corporation Archivist, she was ably replaced by Jenifer Comins, who had finished her project assignment with the Ellis Papers. Finally, we were delighted to welcome a new staff member, Karla Nielsen, as Curator of Literature. Karla came to the RBML by way of UC Berkeley (Phd) and the University of Illinois (MLIS). She had previously served as an ARL intern in the RBML. It is very good to have Karla as part of team. We were also very pleased to welcome Adrien Hilton, our newest processing archivist. Adrien came to the RBML from NYU, where she worked as an archivist in the Tamiment Library. With our archival accessions burgeoning, Adrien has plenty to do in her new post.

Digital Projects:

RBML staff have played a leading role in delivering primary source content to the web and to improving our ability to ingest and manage born-digital materials. This past year Eric Wakin, Susan Hamson, Jane Siegel, Carrie Hintz, and Jane Gorjevsky all contributed to the projects below:

Photographs (ca. 1000) from the Community Service Society archives documenting turn-of-the-century urban poverty.

Digitization of the student newspapaper *The Spectator*.

Part of the Peter Wellington Alexander Papers for the Missouri Historical Society.

Cuneiform tablets for the Cuneiform Digital Library, an international project based at UCLA.

Wellington Koo Papers: planning and preparation for a mass digitization project in collaboration with the public library of Shanghai.

Born-digital archiving:

Survey of all born-digital materials in RBML collections
Drafting policies and procedures documents for use by staff and clients
Web archiving project for sites relating to RBML collections

Web Exhibits:

RBML staff create more online exhibits than any other unit in the CUL. This past year, staff produced:

"Core Curriculum: Literature Humanities" (Karla Nielson, in support of the Core)

"Core Curriculum: Contemporary Civilization" (Karla Nielsen, in support of the Core)

"Joseph Pulitzer and the World" (Jenny Lee, following an earlier exhibit on the same theme)

"The Unwritten History: Alexander Gumby's African America"(Nicholas Osborne, PhD student in History)

"Music at Columbia: the First 100 Years" (Jenny Lee, an online version of an earlier show)

"The Reading of Books and the Reading of Literature" (PhD students in English)

"The People in the Book: Hebraica and Judaica Manuscripts from Columbia University Libraries" (Michelle Chesner, online version of current exhibit)

These constitute an impressive accomplishment and serve as testimony to the commitment of RBML to providing broad access to our collections.

Conferences and Programs:

The RBML sponsored or co-sponsored a variety of interesting and important academic gatherings, including:

"Social Forces Revisited." A conference co-sponsored with Art History and Social Work on the occasion of a major exhibit from our Community Service Society collection.

"Private vs. Public Responses to Banking Crises: Clearinghouses vs. Central Banks." A major conference of economists and bankers co-sponsored by the New York Clearing House, whose records we have.

"A City Re-imagined: Voices from 9/11 in Poetry and Performance." Co-sponsored with WNYC radio and featuring excerpts from the vast recorded 9/11 archive from the CCOH.

"Injured Cities, Urban Afterlives." A major CCOH conference devoted to remembering 9/11 on the part of people who were there.

Readings from the poetry of Czeslaw Milosz on the occasion of the centenary of his birth. A program accompanying an exhibition devoted to Milosz in the RBML.

"The Reading of Books and Reading of Literature." A conference organized by and co-sponsored with the Department of English.

Meeting at Columbia of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association. Hosted a reception and prepared an exhibition.

Exhibitions:

RBML staff, and especially Jenny Lee, were quite busy with a full array of exhibits, as the following survey makes plain:

Kempner Gallery:

Centennial Exhibition for the Carnegie Corporation of New York (Fall)

Gorey Preserved: The Edward Gorey Collection of Andrew Alpern (Spring)

Chang Octagon:

100th Anniversary of the Columbia University Archives (Fall)

Florine Stettheimer – Alternative Modernist (Spring)

Joseph Urban and the Great American Review (Summer)

Cube Cases:

Czeslaw Milosz Centenary (Fall)

George Olcott Roman coins (Spring, and also in Low Library)

"Victorian Orthodoxies and Cliches" (Spring)

"The Reading of Books and the Reading of Literature" (Spring)

Exhibition Loans:

In addition to crafting exhibits from its own collections, the RBML lends regularly to shows around the world. This past year has been no exception:

Loan of Florine Stettheimer figurines for "Four Saints in Three Acts" to Metropolitan Museum for "The Steins Collect."

Random House /*Ulysses*/ items, including trial copy, loaned to the Ransom Center at the University of Texas for "Burned, Banned, Seized, and Censored."

175 items from the Community Service Society papers for "Social Forces Visualized: Photography and Scientific Charity, 1900-1920," at the Wallach Gallery.

Emma Lazarus items (letters and books) to Museum of Jewish Heritage for "Emma Lazarus: Poet of Exiles."

World Building Cornerstone Box and reproductions of World Building plans to Skyscraper Museum for "News: Paper Spires."

Two Sarah Jay letters to New-York Historical Society for "Be Safe! Be Sure! Get Vaccinated! Smallpox and Vaccination in New York, 1689-2008."

Two /*Uncle Tom's Cabin*/ items, including the first edition, loaned to the Wallach Gallery for "/Robert S. Duncanson: An Antebellum African American Artist."

Andrew Carnegie's donations ledger and rolodex to the Museum of American Finance for the exhibition, "Andrew Carnegie: Forging Philanthropy."

Special Presentation Exhibits:

In the early spring, RBML curators assembled an array of interesting and unusual materials in a special display for the American Friends of the British Library.

Tanya Chebotarev prepared a splendid group of documents relating to the history of Serbia for a visit by the President of Serbia.

Grants and Awards:

RBML staff were responsible for bringing in nearly $2 million in grants from foundations for important projects:

> $660,000 the Carnegie Corporation to the Center for Oral History to conduct an intensive program of interviews with present and former Carnegie staff and grantees.
>
> $1 million from the International Fellowships Program to process, conserve, and provide access to its archives, analog and digital.
>
> $70,000 from the Office of the President to process, conserve, and provide access to the Judge Wilfred Feinberg Papers.
>
> $10,000 from the Delmas Foundation to assist with the processing of the Amiri Baraka Papers.
>
> $150,000 from the NHPRC for ongoing support of the Selected Papers of John Jay project.

Academic Engagement:

RBML staff support a broad spectrum of academic programs and classes in the College, GSAS, and the professional schools, as well as faculty and students from institutions in the greater metropolitan area. Jane Siegel, Jenny Lee, Eric Wakin, Karla Nielsen, Tanya Chebotarev, Consuelo Dutschke, and Mary Marshall Clark were exceptionally busy working with graduate and undergraduate groups this past year. In fact, we doubled the volume of classes and students coming to the RBML for course support and enrichment. Some 99 separate classes visited the RBML for instruction and enrichment, and that group comprised nearly 1,400 students, undergraduate and graduate.

In addition, curatorial staff offer courses at Columbia and elsewhere. During the past year, Eric taught two courses in Columbia's History Department: "Archives and Knowledge" and "Memory and American Narratives of Self." Mary Marshall Clark continues to play a key role in the new MA program in Oral History, which she co-directs and staffs. Consuelo Dutschke taught "Introduction to Paleography, 800-1500," at Rare Book School (UVa). Susan Hamson offered introductory courses in archives and archives management at Pratt Institute.

Lecture and Program Series:

RBML staff not only engage in multiple ways with Columbia and other area academic programs. They also reach out to the community at large with a rich menu of programs and offerings that relate to the collections we hold and the work that we do. These included:

Book History Colloquium (Fall)

Barbara Heritage (UVa): "Bronte and the Bookmakers"

John Bidwell (Morgan Lib.): "Papermaking in American: A Progress Report"

Peter Mack (Warburg Inst.): "Print and Innovation in 16th-century Rhetoric"

Jeff Peachy (Book conservator): "Reconstructing Diderot: Late 18th-century French Bookbinding Structure"

Book History Colloquium (Spring)

Jack Lynch (Rutgers): "Authentic Accounts: William Henry Ireland Comes Clean"

Marvin Taylor (NYU): "Food for Thought: Building Research Collections in Food Studies"

Emile Schrijver (U of Amsterdam): "Defining a Field: Jewish Books in the Age of Print"

Business History Forum (Fall)

Daniel Raff (Wharton): "The Business of Oxford University Press and the Future of Academic Publishing"

Mary O'Sullivan (U of Geneva): "Why Yankee Doodle Went to London: American Corporate Securities in the London Market, 1865-1914"

Susie J. Pak (St. John's): "J. P. Morgan, German-Jewish Bankers, and the Crisis of the First World War"

Business History Forum (Spring)

Michael Zakim (Tel Aviv), Elizabeth Blackmar (Columbia), Edward Baptist (Cornell), and Jonathan Levy (Princeton): panel on *Capitalism Takes Command* (2011)

Eric Hilt (Wellesley): "Wall Street and the Rise of the Corporation in New York, 1791-1826"

Alexander J. Field (Santa Clara): "A Great Leap Forward: 1930s Depression and US Economic Growth"

Center for Oral History Seminar Series: 14 public seminars featuring prominent oral historians, journalists, filmmakers, and human rights workers.

Center for Oral History Community Workshop Series: 5 workshops with community leaders seeking to use oral history in their community work. Partners included Picture the Homeless, Meet the Road, and UNIFEM (UN working group on women's advocacy).

Center for Oral History Summer Institute: "What is Remembered: Life Story Approaches in Human Rights Contexts." 22 people from 12 countries attended sessions over a two-week period.

Housekeeping:

Last year, the RBML received the green light to proceed with the installation and testing of the Aeon circulation system. A task group was formed headed by Susan Hamson and comprising public services and curatorial staff as well as IT staff. Progress has been good and we are scheduled to "go live" in January 2013.

The inadequacy of LibQual as an assessment tool for special collections units has long been a brake on our ability to better understand the needs and desires of our clients and how we match up to them. Last year we teamed up with assessment professionals to custom design an assessment tool that we could use onsite with researchers using material in the reading rooms. A task group led by Jocelyn Wilk and Susan Hamson formed the nucleus of the effort. The initial results are in, and they are quite positive and encouraging, especially with regard to the professionalism and helpfulness of the staff. A formal analysis of the data will occur this year. We will be conducting a second assessment this year, targeting Columbia classes that visit us in the course of the term.

Our security system was state of the art when it was installed in the mid-1990s, in response to a major theft in 1994. However, over the years it has become progressively dysfunctional, to the point where it can be said to protect us only minimally. The need for a new system has been apparent for some time: there is simply no alternative to replacing the present system in its entirety. Failing to act leaves the RBML and Columbia vulnerable. So, during this past year we began working with Columbia Public Safety on a totally new system that swaps out all of the analog cameras with digital models and ties us in securely with central Public Safety. The system has been designed and broken into phases that can be brought up over a 5-year period. There should be no reason why we cannot begin installing the new system by summer, 2013.

Finally, thanks to some unexpected publicity from an article about it in Columbia Magazine, the mantelpiece at which Edgar Allen Poe allegedly wrote "The Raven" was brought out from its secluded storage space to a public place where all can study and admire. We are in quest of a stuffed raven.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead:

Building on initiatives and projects launched during the past year, the year ahead will see us continuing to work on:

The digitization of the Spectator

The archiving of the IFP files, which begins in earnest in 2013

Assessment, analyzing current data and collecting new data on classes in the RBML

The Atlantic Philanthropies funded enabling grant

The Carnegie Corporation oral history project

The migration of our security system

The Koo Papers digitization project

These in addition to a full menu of processing projects, exhibitions, lecture and program series, classes, and the many other outstanding areas in which the RBML excels. We are currently awaiting notification as to the status of two grant proposals, one to the CLIR for our human rights collections, the other to the NEH for the preservation of major recorded sound collection. In addition, we will be applying to the NEH for additional support for the Papers of John Jay.

New initiatives and projects that we look forward to in the coming year, include:

Planning for the occupation of all of stack 12

Launching our new, consolidated RBML blog, supplemented by a more ambitious utilization of social networking and alert tools

Partnering with the newly created Digital Humanities Center on projects of common interest

Contributing to the shaping of the new CUL website

Engaging in the next round of CUL strategic planning

Doubtless there is much that will come up in the 2012-13 academic year that we cannot anticipate, but of one thing we can be sure: we will be fully occupied every work day - and then some. The

mature professionalism, abiding service ethic, and remarkable creativity of the RBML staff will insure that we are the equal – if not better – than any challenge.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the staff of the RBML,

Michael Ryan, Director

Appendix A

RBML PUBLIC SERVICE STATISTICS, 2011 - 2012

Remote Reference: 2320 queries/requests handled, +12%

Onsite researchers (unique): 1688, -6%

Onsite researchers (total): 5633, +12%

Items pulled: 19,967, +13%

Unique class visits: 99, +110%

Total students in class visits: 1,385, +110%

Appendix B

Processing Stats September 2011-September 2012

Accessions: 2345.63 linear feet (full list of accessions available on request)
Processing stats: 1697.75 linear ft.

We have processed, in whole or part, 77 collections. Of these 59 new collections or additions have been completely
processed and are open to the public (18 remain in progress)

List of Processed/In process Collections:

David Hamburg
Paul Oskar Kristeller
Women's National Book Association
Maureen Howard
Barney Rosset (ongoing)
Ulysses Kay (ongoing)
Human Rights First (ongoing)
CLR James
Albert Ellis
Margaret Busby
John Jay Iselin
Committee to Project Journalists
Walter Farley Papers
Amnesty International of the USA (Northeast
Regional Office)
AIUSA Abe Bonowitz
Georges Borchardt Agency Records (ongoing)
Ulysses Kay (ongoing)
Pulitzer Prize (ongoing)
Peggy Biderman
Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility
(ongoing)
Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League (ongoing)
Herbert Lehman papers
Yosef Yerushalmi (ongoing)
Frederick Fried Coney Island Collection
Graduate School of Journalism
George State
Roscoe Elard
Lewis Harvie Blair
Gilbert Stork
Wayne Wiegand
Daniel Boone Dodson
Charles Haupter
Wolf Franck
Mitchell Ginsberg
Paul Revere Reynolds
National Story Project

Ella Winter
Van Ingen
Olcott, George
Curtis Carroll Davis
American Printing History Association
Frank Pokorney
Marie Read Smith
James H. Sheldon
Amiri Baraka (ongoing)
Marilyn French Papers (ongoing)
Indusco
Andrew Sarris
Ida Rapoport
Margaret Young
Wilfred Feinberg (ongoing)
Charlotte Salisbury Papers
RBML Exhibition Records (ongoing)
[UA] Columbia University Orchestra Tapes
[UA] Dept. of Chemical Engineering
[UA] William D. Clark Papers
[UA] Air Force ROTC
L.R. Sayles
Leon Fraser (ongoing)
Industrial Workers of the World
Telechronometer Company
Koji Nakanishi
Thomas Whiteside Papers (ongoing)
Joseph Parrish Thompson and Leonard Bacon Papers
(The Independent)
Peter Maas (ongoing)
Iris Owens
Marvin Kitman (ongoing)
Howard "Stretch" Johnson
Manning Marable (ongoing)
Institute of Current and World Affairs (ongoing)
Williamson Family
Maxwell Bodenheim
Marcus Langseth diaries
Barden Gale Collection of Sam Zell Automatons
Lucien Price
Hope Eldridge
Abraham Anderson Interviews with Diana Trilling
Seminar in American Civilization on the American
Broadcasting Network